

# Back Page

## COMPETITION

Recognise this neat job ?

Clue1:  
It's an International Communications Hub

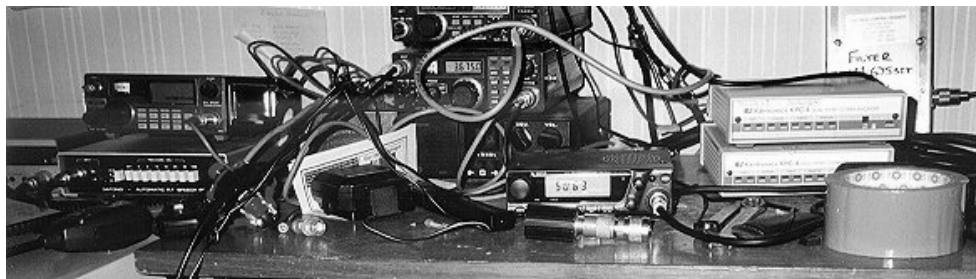
Clue2:  
The Radios look a lot smarter now !

Clue3:  
The hospitality on site is top notch too.

- Sorry no prizes !



The Aerials - well most of them !



The Radios - there are more of them now !

## ERG COMMUNICATION CHANNELS

**Secretary:** Richard Merrell G4GUJ e-mail [rmerrell@iee.org](mailto:rmerrell@iee.org)

**Packet Radio:** [ERG@GB7COS](mailto:ERG@GB7COS)

**Internet Website:** <http://www.swsystem.demon.co.uk/erg>

Regular news updates appear throughout the year on the ERG website, and on email and packet radio bulletins. Please contact our Hon.Sec. G4GUJ for more details

### **Frequency Bands:-**

**GB3DA** 145.125 MHz Input, 145.725MHz Output Channel R5 (RV58)

**GB3ER** 434.675MHz Input, 433.075MHz Output Channel RB3 (RU246)

**GB3CMS** Microwave Beacon 10.36896 GHz (keeper - Clive Ward G1EUC)

**Newsletter Editor:** Murray Niman G6JYB e-mail [mjniman@iee.org](mailto:mjniman@iee.org)



# Essex Repeater Group *Xmas Newsletter*



## SUBS CUT IN NEW INITIATIVE !

In a creative move aimed at improving the membership base the 1998 AGM approved a new two tier structure for members annual subs.

Recognising the need to encourage new members a reduced rate for Novices and SWLs has now been introduced. At the same time fees for ordinary members have been maintained at last years levels, making them better value.

This is one aspect of our efforts to improve both size and profile of the membership, which like many groups is under pressure. Any assistance in recruiting members will always be appreciated.

### 1998/9 Subscriptions Rates

- Novices/SWLs £5
- Ordinary Members £8



## SEASONS GREETINGS

The Committee wishes you and your family all the best for 1999

## BOWLING PRIZES

Alan, Jeanette, Emma and John. Winners of the trophies and wooden spoons from the October Bowling contest are pictured opposite.

For further details on this popular event refer to Sport inside.

Photo courtesy of John G8JJJ



## CHANGEOVER TO 12.5 KHZ - A FINAL REMINDER !

Since February 1998 the repeaters have been operating within 12.5KHz channel output deviation. The receivers on the other hand still accept 25KHz transmissions. This dual setting causes compromises though, and now time is almost up. Therefore ERG will introduce narrowband IF filters into the receivers early in 1999 and switch to full 12.5KHz operation. Please adjust your equipment as soon as possible. In particular, please ensure that your Tx deviation is reduced.

## RA SHEDS LIGHT ON REPEATER ISSUES

The following appeared in the December issue of RadComm and is reproduced here with permission from the RSGB. Comments from Dick G4GUJ are given at the end.

The Radiocommunications Agency (RA) has issued the following advice to repeater keepers:

The Amateur Radio Licence prohibits the licensee from setting up a repeater so a Notice of Variation (NOV) to the licence is therefore needed...

It is the responsibility of the applicant to demonstrate that a need for the repeater exists, that the application meets technical requirements and that it will not cause interference to other services.

The responsibility of the NOV holder (repeater keeper) does not stop once the repeater is operating. The repeater keeper must ensure that adequate close down facilities exist, for instance in the event that the transmitter goes spurious and interferes with another radio service. While the vast majority of amateurs abide by their licence conditions, there are unfortunately a few who do not. It is therefore also the keeper's responsibility to monitor the traffic using the repeater from time to time, to ensure that those using the repeater are complying with licence conditions.

## TACKLING ABUSE PROBLEMS

It is important to remember that, under the terms of the NOV, the repeater keeper is responsible for the messages being transmitted over the repeater. Thus, repeater keepers have a duty to take action when becoming aware of abuse as it is their licence conditions that are being infringed.

For example where callsigns are not being given at the appropriate points, a reminder from the repeater keeper about correct operating procedures to those concerned would be appropriate. Early action of this kind can stop more serious abuse problems from developing. In more serious cases of abuse the RA recommends that the repeater be closed for a short period of time. Before closing the repeater it would be helpful if the repeater keeper informed the users why the repeater is being closed.

If the abuse continues on a regular basis the repeater keeper should initially report the abuse to the Amateur Radio Observation Service (AROS), who liaise with the Agency about cases of abuse. The reports should be sent to the AROS co-ordinator, RSGB HQ, Lambda House, Cranborne Road, Potters Bar, Herts EN6 3JE. In cases where the Agency is investigating a complaint of repeater abuse, the repeater keeper may be asked what action has been taken to combat abuse.

The Agency recognises that many repeater keepers and their groups work hard to provide a good service to the amateur community from their repeaters and applauds those who take care to discourage abuse and poor operating practices.

However, there is no escaping that the NOV comes with a responsibility. Where a repeater keeper cannot show that responsibilities have been met by taking actions to combat abuse, the Agency may have to consider if they are fit and proper person to hold the NOV.

## TEN PIN BOWLING

Yet another enjoyable Ten Pin Bowling event took place at the Chelmsford Megabowl on the 24<sup>th</sup> October. More people than ever took place this time with 41 actually bowling.

The defending champ Malcolm G3XVV was put into second place by Alan G0EGX complete with Bowls Blazer and rule book.

The top lady of the evening was Emma from the G8GNZ party.

The two wooden spoons went to John also of the GNZ party (although his spoon seemed to end up with Geoff G8GNZ in error), and Jeanette M1CKG adding a second spoon to her collection.

John G8JIJ

- Photo on front Page

POS' N	NAME	GAME-1	GAME-2	TOTAL
1	Alan G0EGX	165	158	323
2	Malcolm G3XVV	146	168	314
3	Alan G0TTM	147	135	282
4	Nigel G6ZVV	141	134	275
5	Tony G0JYI	120	154	274
6	Clive G1EUC	118	149	267
7	Keith G6NHU	120	142	262
8	Steven	121	134	255
9	Bob G0RSW	150	102	252
10	Emma	98	137	235
11	Geoff G8GNZ	105	114	219
12	Susan	103	109	212
13	John G1JIJ	97	109	206
14	Ron G0PJZ	100	103	203
15	Roy the Boy	97	105	202
16	Mark	91	108	199
17	Denise	86	93	179
18	Alan G7ABL	86	90	176
19	Jan	93	79	172
20	Jenny (Mrs.HCD)	99	66	165
21	Brian G7MHK	83	80	163
22	Mrs.G8GNZ	69	89	158
23	Kirsty	88	68	156
24	June	81	74	155
25	Simon G7HCD	66	85	151
26	Bob	76	74	150
27	Chris (Mrs.GVK)	73	75	148
28	Debbs	66	76	142
29	Becky	89	51	140
30	Annette	79	59	138
31	Terry M1CXC	72	63	135
32	Andrew G6SBS	63	71	134
33	Bunny	68	59	127
34	Dave G7GVK	53	72	125
35	Geoff G4GKH	78	46	124
36	Kevin	53	66	119
37	Amanda	59	57	116
38	John	57	59	116
39	Dawn	57	40	97
40	Christine	53	39	92
41	Jeanette	26	35	61

Highest and lowest placed ladies and gentlemen are highlighted

# Members News

## ERG 1998 AGM

The ERG AGM was held on 22nd October 1998 at the traditional Danbury venue. On the night Bob Cheverall was elected as a new Committee member - we welcome him

We were privileged to have newly elected RMC Chairman Carlos Eavis G0AKI present, who made a key address on abuse issues and contributed to discussions on this and local coverage matters. The latter was illustrated by specially printed large colour maps courtesy of Jan G7UVP.

## ERG 1998/9 COMMITTEE

*Chairman:* Mike Wheaton G4ZPE  
*Hon. Secretary:* Dick Merrell G4GUJ  
*Hon. Treasurer:* Chrissy Merrell G8OIV

### *Ordinary Committee Members*

Bob Cheverall SWL  
Brian Lewis-Hill G1EOV  
Murray Niman G6JYB  
Jan Swanwick G7UVP  
Clive Ward G1EUC  
Simon Wilton G7HCD

## ERG PUBLICITY DRIVE IN 1999

Attendance at rallies alone has served ERG fairly well in the past. With such events in general decline, 1999 will see therefore see another aspect of the plan to broaden our publicity and recruitment efforts. The groups web site has been modernised, and a rolling Powerpoint presentation is available for rallies. And now . . .

Colour Slide Presentations are booked for local societies. Provisionally set are Chelmsford (CARS) on Feb-2, Dengie on Feb-15, and Braintree Club on Mar-1.

The Group also plans to attend Canvey (Feb-7) and Colchester Rallies, and the W&S Open Day.

## ESSEX HEIGHTS

Brian G1EOV saw this in a recent Daily Mail and thought it may be of interest:-

"QUESTION - What is the highest point in Essex ?

According to the Essex review of 1893, many consider Danbury to be the point in Essex, but there are places which rise above it.

Brentwood High Street is 357.5 ft above sea level, which is exceeded by Ambresbury Banks (381 ft), Laindon Hills (385.8 ft), Hellions Bumstead (402 ft), North East of Henham (409 ft), Chrishall (433.8 ft), Langley Upper Green (450 ft), Great Chrishall (451 ft) and Heydon (453 ft).

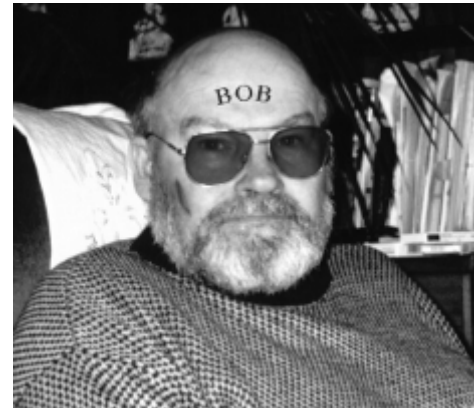
The honour of being the Everest of Essex goes to a point half a mile north of Langley Church, which is 484.7ft above sea level.

This information was authored by S.Gilgallon of London E4.

Ed: Clive G1EUC tells me that the base of the Danbury site is 110-112m ASL (360.9-367.5 ft). In fact the county does have plenty of ups and downs which do affect our coverage

# Members News

## BOB CHEVERALL SWL . . .



As the newest member of the ERG committee I thought it might be of interest to the Repeater users as to whom exactly they have been landed with and what I believe I have to offer.

Firstly I'm a local lad and some xx? amount of years was born in Rettendon and have lived locally within the Repeater area ever since. I am married to Lyn with a daughter of nine called Christine.

I first became interested in radio in the early sixties making my own transmitters for FM 108. An interest in 27 Mhz CB came next, where I then progressed onto SSB. This is when I really began to enjoy the hobby and I was able, using SSB, to help raise money for charity e.g. The Talking Newspaper for the blind.

I soon realised that as enjoyable as the pastime was, I didn't want to be constantly looking over my shoulder and waiting for the inevitable knock on the door. After this series of events I dropped my use of CB and became a dedicated SWL. In the main I listened to the HF bands primarily 40 and 80 metres.

My other main hobby is sea fishing and I love listening to sixties and country and western music. I am also educating myself as how to get the best out of my computer and my expertise is gradually improving.

The urge to speak rather than just listen remained with me and it was after a chat with Clive G1EUC that I decided that I would go for the B license. A close look at his station and regular, almost daily visits to his shack have convinced me that I have made the right decision. The help/encouragement I have had from other stations, such as Mike Zpeee, Terry MICXC (top station in East Hanningfield) and Jim G6FCL have furthered my resolve to be on the air as soon as I can. My new found friends have helped me with obtaining both equipment and aerials and I now have a listening station that is ready to instantly become a transmitting station the day my ticket arrives through the letterbox. Which I hope will around February 1999, as I take the exam this December.

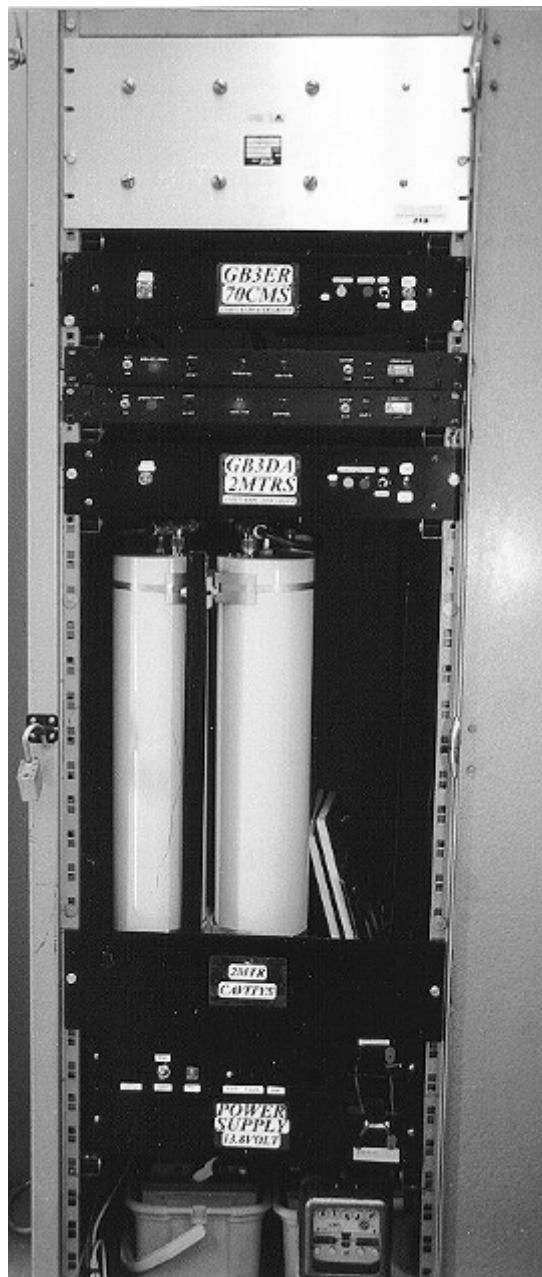
Since I have been monitoring the repeater I have enjoyed listening to all the regular characters such as the Plumber, the Dent Pusher, the Van Driver and Mr Dynamic to name but a few, but not the continual irritation of the one station who insists on talking himself. I think the good-natured humour and the banter that goes on is very entertaining. I have also been fortunate enough to meet a good number of the other Repeater users at the bowling evening, the AGM and a good number at Clive's house.

With regards as to what I can offer the ERG, it's certainly at the moment not technical expertise but PR, like helping increase membership at Rallies and when I meet other stations. There are a lot of tasks that do not require technical skills such as administration eg. mailing, newsletter etc.

Anyway I look forward to meeting all the users at some time or another and hope its sooner than later.

Happy Christmas to all from my family and myself.

- and best wishes with your RAE Exam Results, Ed.



## HERE THEY ARE !

Looking back at past newsletters showed the odd fact that we have not pictured the voice repeaters in full other than on our publicity board and website gallery.

The equipment is housed in a single 19" rack cabinet, which is shown here in a July 1998 photo with the door open to reveal the kit. From top to bottom:-

- ER Cavities (behind the shiny panel)
- ER Radio
- ER Logic Unit
- DA Logic Unit
- DA Radio
- DA Cavities (the tall cylinders)
- Mains Power Supply
- Backup Batteries and Electricity Meter

Not visible here is the DC distribution, remote control system, and the aerial feeder connections on top of the cabinet.

## NEW REPEATERS ?

In recent months the committee has been considering future plans for repeater equipment both on our existing frequencies and new ones. In the latter case 6m and 23cm voice repeaters have figured most in our thoughts.

The committee has recently initiated feasibility studies which will look at aerials, feeders, cavities, radios, control systems and sites for 6m/23cm equipment, and not least of all the costs involved and how they might be met.

Those present at the AGM tended to favour 23cm rather than 6m, but we are keen to hear feedback from you all, and most importantly whether you have, or plan to have, radios on these bands. Note that this is a study, not a commitment.

Murray G6JYB

## Comments from Our Hon Secretary Dick G4GUJ NOV holder for GB3DA and GB3ER.

The message from the RA reproduced opposite have a number of salient points that require amplifying.

In the Spring 97 newsletter the changes to the regulations relating to repeater usage were reproduced. Now that we have got the RA interested in our current 'difficulty' on GB3DA it is not unreasonable to expect that they are taking an acute interest in the operating practices of our repeaters. I have heard a number of users not following the Identification requirements of para-7 in the BR68 booklet (i.e. your licence!!) and feel that it is timely to remind all of you of the regulations.

Within Paragraph 7, the relaxation given in paragraph 7(IA) – which relates to nets – does NOT apply. Therefore each of you are required to give your callsigns at the START and END of your period of transmissions, even if the only word you intend to say is 'yes!'

I admit that in the past I have fallen into this trap so I know how easy it is to do so, but please do try and keep to your licence conditions so that I do not loose the NOV's and you the repeaters.

On the abuse front, we – the Essex Repeater Group, have produced an easily completed form for the reporting of abuse on GB3DA and GB3ER. Copies of the form can be downloaded from our web site ([www.system.demon.co.uk/erg](http://www.system.demon.co.uk/erg)) or directly from any Committee member. Please send completed forms to me or to Mike G4ZPE and we will ensure that they will get to the appropriate people. Of the forms that have been passed to me, they have been passed on to the RA at a minuted meeting between RA and the RSGB, so they are in the right hands. At the AGM, Carlos – the RMC Chairman – requested that the flow of forms be maintained should the abuse continue. Please be diligent on this matter and keep the reports coming if any further instances are overheard.

As you must be aware, we do have the ability of both turning off and turning on the repeaters at the drop of a hat. This facility is, and will, be used as and when one of my remote operators determines that the level of abuse has reached an unacceptable level. These guys are working as my agents on this matter and I will, without question, support any (legal) action they take.

When boxes get switched off we do appreciate that we are spoiling things for the majority of our users, however please be patient with us. This is our only means of combating the problem. Only the RA can legally deal with an offending operator either via the courts or by an amendment of their licence. We have to wait until they have completed any investigations they see fit to undertake and decide on what, if any, action they feel is appropriate.

Whilst it is good to see that the RA 'Agency recognises that many repeater keepers and their groups work hard to provide a good service to the amateur community' it must also be said that the expenses of doing so are NOT met by either the RA or the RSGB. We have to rely on membership subscriptions and donations/fund raising events to keep the repeaters operational. May I ask each and every one of you to try and encourage repeater users to support the repeaters either by joining the Essex Repeater Group or by giving a donation to the group. Every little helps.

This being the season of good will etc..... may I wish all of our members and anonymous supporters and Very Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year.

73 Dick G4GUJ.